

# The Register

## Winter 2008









# *The Register*

## *Winter 2008*

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# Table of Contents

<b>4</b>	Coward	Kristely Bastien, I
<b>5</b>	Two Settings for One	Adriana Lasso-Harrier, IV
<b>6</b>	Independent Film	Maya Nojehowicz, IV
<b>8</b>	Roots	Lily Burger, IV
<b>10</b>	The Old Man Walking Down High Streets	Aoife O'Flaherty, II
<b>11</b>	Shabbat	Anonymous
<b>12</b>	When Nights Were Young	Anonymous
<b>14</b>	Wallpapered in Words	Nick Parker, III
<b>16</b>	Rooftop Euphoria	Xenia Pantos, II
<b>17</b>	Speak Now or Forever Hold Your Peace	Tatiana Mia Joyce, IV
<b>18</b>	Desert Hands	Maya Nojehowicz, IV
<b>20</b>	O Que Is Gra?	Maria Weissman, I
<b>23</b>	The Equalizer	Sahar Hakim, II
<b>26</b>	Baby	Aoife O'Flaherty, II
<b>28</b>	To Kiss or Not To Kiss?	Christelle Saintis, I
<b>31</b>	Untitled	Caitlin Healey, II
<b>35</b>	A Bodily Trade	Maya Nojehowicz, IV
<b>36</b>	M2 Baby	Ada Lin, III
<b>38</b>	For Rent	Lisa Wang, III
<b>40</b>	A Scorching Seaside Experience	Christelle Saintis, I
<b>42</b>	The Things You Can't Forget	Lisa Wang, III
<b>44</b>	I am from	Justin Singletary, V
<b>45</b>	Fall from Grace	Lisa Wang, III
<b>46</b>	Autumn Falls	Caytie Campbell-Orrock, IV





# 「COWARD」

*The Kite Runner* by Khaled Hosseini  
A poem-letter written to Amir

Can you look at yourself in the mirror  
Or acknowledge what you did  
When his innocence was taken  
Away, behind a tree you hid  
Remember all the times he was there to  
Defend you in your time of need

Tolerating all your craven ways  
He was a true brother indeed  
In every respect you walked away  
Evading his silent pleas  
Forgiving you nonetheless, you

Grieved and wept but always reprised  
Unless you face the things you've done  
It will never disappear  
Leaving the past behind will only keep  
The memories here.

Beneath your complex exterior  
Exists a helpless boy  
Trying to find love and acceptance to a  
Relentless and unforgiving world  
Afraid, cold, and lonely  
You fear what lies ahead  
Although you cannot change the past you can give  
Loyalty to his son instead.

- Kristely Bastien, I





# Two Settings For One

It had been eight years. Eight long years since he had left, promising to return in a few weeks, a few months at the most.

But the weeks had stretched into months, and before she knew it, five months had already passed. She wasn't worried, there had been no telling when exactly he would return home, and he had been gone for much longer on previous trips such as this one. When he came home, they would finally marry, she mused. Move someplace far away. Venice, perhaps.

She didn't start to feel uneasy about the length of his absence until her birthday came and went and he was still not home. He was always home for her birthday. She hadn't gotten a call or even a letter. Winter came, the snow covering his van that stood, unused, and when the spring rains washed away the frost, the van rusted.

Every night she would set the table for two. One setting for her, one setting for him. She listened carefully, waiting to hear his key in the lock, but it never came. She jumped and ran to the phone whenever it rang, waiting to hear his warm voice on the other end. She waited for the mailman at the end of the road, and grabbed her mail from his hands, rifling through the bills and catalogs, searching for an envelope addressed to her in his messy script.

And so the years passed by, yet she never gave up hope. When the paint on the house peeled and the color grayed, she did not repaint it; for fear that he would come home and not recognize the house. She never moved his van, even though it meant that she could not park her own car in her driveway. And although many friends and neighbors tried to convince her that he had left her for good, possibly even died, she still set the table for two every night.

It was January 1<sup>st</sup>, New Year's day, which marked the beginning of another of his absences. Persuaded by her friends, she made a resolution to forget him. That night she set the table for only herself and concentrated on not listening for his key in the lock.

She jumped when she heard an unusual noise outside. It sounded ... it sounded like someone fumbling for their keys. She watched, paralyzed, as the doorknob turned and as he stepped inside.

She did not recognize the man who slowly shut the door and turned to face her. He was older, harder, much different than the man who had left her eight years ago. It couldn't be *him*.

"Lily?" the man who stood in front of her asked softly. She stared at him, this stranger. He had a beard. Her lover hadn't had a beard when he left home.

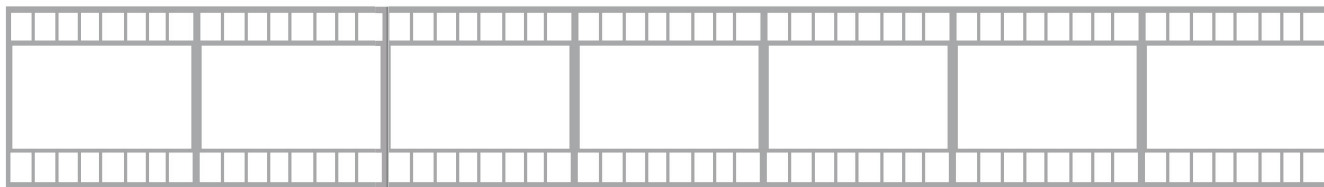
"No," she lied. She did not know what made her lie to him, but once she started she couldn't stop. "No, you must have the wrong house."

The stranger looked at her, confusion in his light eyes. They were somehow familiar, but she impatiently pushed that thought away. Anyone could have eyes like that. "Lily...it's me," the man said, stepping closer. "It's me, Thomas. I'm sorry I couldn't write, but things...came up. But I'm home now, and that's what matters."

She glared at him, certain now that this was all a huge prank. The nerve of someone to cover here to pretend to be him! She was known to some in this town as a freak, but she had never thought that people would be mean enough to do something like *this*. "This isn't a joke, sir," she told him, steering him towards the door. "I'm afraid I don't know you. Please leave." And as she said these words, she shut the door in her lover's face.







# I N D E P E N D E N T

The man sitting directly across from me,  
His knee not two feet from mine,  
This man, he looks like he's been plucked  
Out of an independent film

He's chosen black to clothe himself, not  
expensive or unique  
Just plain black pants and a thin black shirt.  
But his shoes  
His shoes are black, leather boots with  
extremely thin,  
Pointed and squared off toes.  
Almost feminine, but not quite.

His hair frames his face in the most solitary  
way,  
Squaring off his forehead and temples,  
Matching the shape of those shoes.  
His hair, though not chosen, continues the  
trend of black.

His wrists, hands, and ears are all adorned with  
gold jewelry.  
The three piercings in his ears, identical on  
both sides,  
The small gold chain on his wrist, hands  
loosely,  
His watch is so big  
And his ring glitters in the light,  
The most colorful thing on him.

He sits, eyes averted, glancing over whatever  
Holding in his hands a thing, blue cell phone and  
one bus pass.  
Someone calls and he answers without looking.  
He holds the phone just barely in his thin fingers,  
It doesn't touch his ear or mouth  
But he moves it toward each as he  
Speaks and listens.

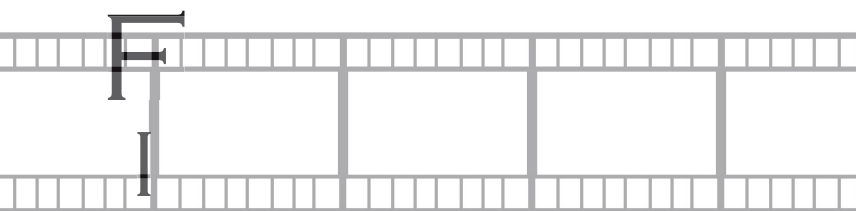
The phone is closed swiftly, no sound, no glance  
And he stands to glide off the bus,  
I follow  
It's my stop as well.

I consider following him home  
But there is no need as he turns down my street  
anyway.  
I walk about three houses behind him,  
Clumsy in comparison.  
He stops at the brown house opposite mine,  
And glides up the three front steps  
To sit down in a white wicker chair  
On the porch.

I reach my own house, open the door,  
And continue to watch him from a window inside.

He sits there gently smoking,  
The cigarette held as loosely between two fingers  
As the cell phone in his other hand.  
His thin gold bracelet slips beneath the black  
sleeve of his shirt,  
Out of sight, as he raises the phone to say  
something  
Perhaps to someone from the same film.

- Maya Nojehowicz, IV



# L M










# Roots



It's summer and the stuffy air clings to me and wraps around me like a blanket. It's been the twelfth sweaty summer sky in a row. Darkness is everywhere; I can hardly see a thing. The energy flows. Lights flash in packs of seconds and it's hard to see where everything is coming from. It's all alluring. I just want to roll with the flashes.

You and me, we run on the streets and tear them up. We almost get hit by a car, but it's only because we're high off of our green spirit. The kind of spirit that won't ever matter again, and only exists to make you never want to age and avoid the eventual D-Day. We're not going anywhere in particular, just looking for a place to lie in and inherit before it gets to be morning. I can't go home because my mother's a basket case, and you can't go home because your family can't remember your name. So we try to find new ones.

We'd spent the earlier part of the evening drinking coffee and listening to mediocre folk bands at Emak's open mike night. We'd left in a hurry, turning corners and jolting through crowds like nobody's business, as if we were actually supposed to be somewhere. We laugh at our pointlessness. We are pointless. We see house after house, and face after face, hour after hour. We whisk by them with our restless wings. The flashes start to get old, and my legs are getting tired of running from the folk music.

Finally you find a secluded place in a park, and we sigh down into the grass and smell. It smells like earth, like dirt, like genesis. It's cooled down now a bit, but we're still sweating like pigs. Things don't spin so much in the grass, though, away from all the lights and jazz. That's all fun for a while, but everyone needs something to fall back on. Everything transitory has to fade; it's just common sense. Sparks fly everywhere, anyway. It all depends on how you look at things.

We reminisce about the old years and laugh drunkenly through our tears. Things are different now. We don't even know why we're crying; we just know that we are, and that it feels good to let them out and share. That's why I want to stay here with you, and your sarcastic words and your loving propensity and your haywire emotions. When I'm around you I feel safe, not lonely, and I'm proud of being different. Like we're two people no one can get through, like we're so screwed up, but not; and life could stop and we'd still go. Just like our hunt for home. And then I think, maybe, just maybe, I've found it in you.

- Lily Burger, IV









# THE OLD MAN WALKING DOWN THE HIGH STREETS

The old man walking down the high streets, skin the color of copper and cinnamon,  
Drenched with sweat and years,  
Sets his steps on air and his chances on repentance.  
A soul as cracked as leather wraps around his wrists  
And ties itself loosely on the brittle skin of his ankles.

The old man walking down the high streets, he knows the men before him  
Because his chin does not lower in the hardened sun to indulge his sight  
In the clouding dust his bare feet rise.  
He knows the men behind him

Because their song has chilled his bones and moved his blood through hours steeped in  
Numbness.

The old man walking down the high streets, traces lines sharpened on the backs ahead  
Etching in his mind their crossing paths and the reddened spirit they have merely incited.  
His broken knuckles bleed fresh through blood that has been dried,  
Caked in the lines of his leathered hands,  
Grasp unbroken through the swaying breeze.

- Aoife O' Flaherty, II

# *Shabbat*

In an empty room  
With bare white walls  
In a tired house  
On a narrow street  
In a crowded ghetto

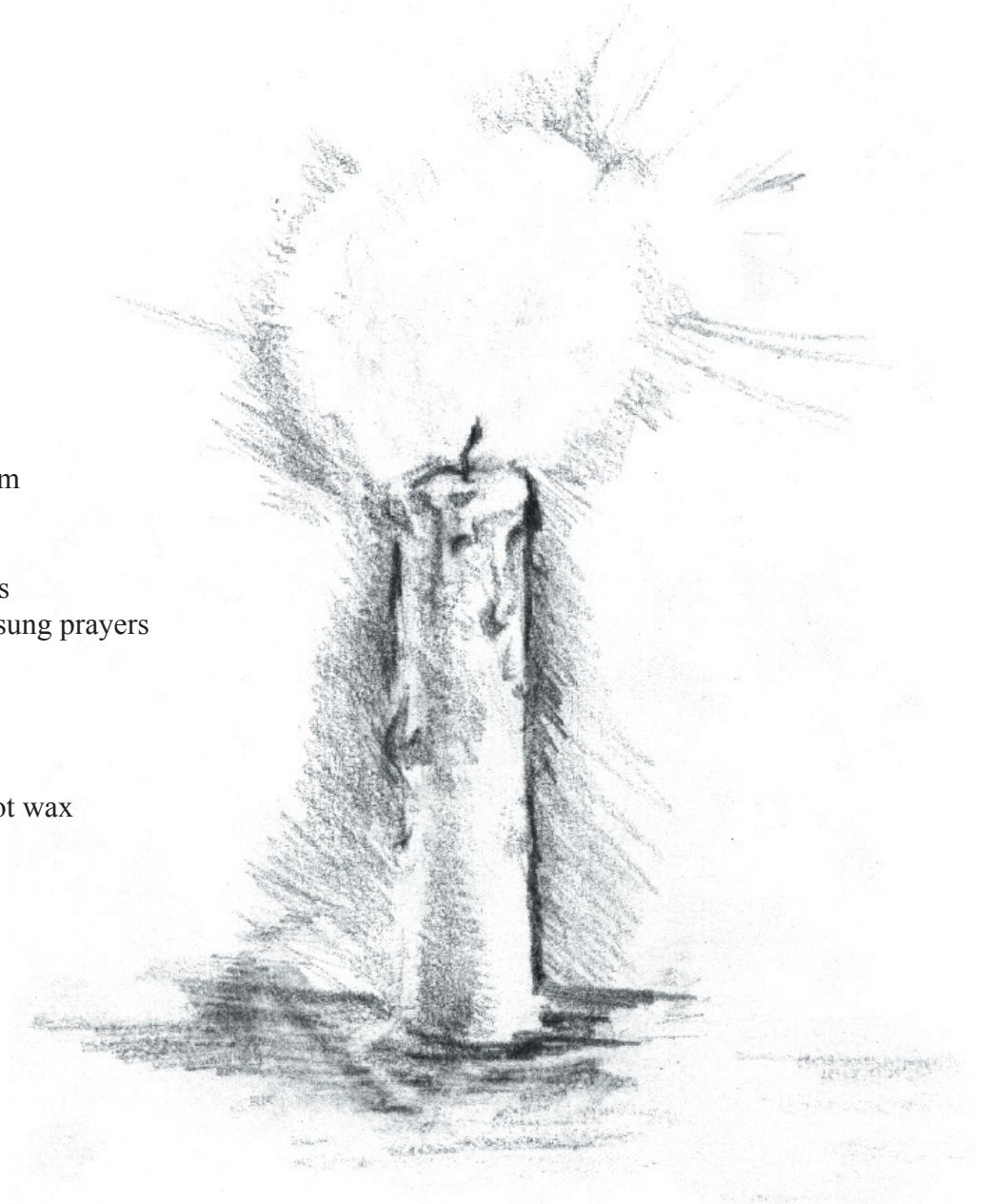
On a dark table-top  
Two candles are burning.

The only light in the gloom  
Is the glow of the fire.

Its carries all the lost souls  
The unheard cries, the unsung prayers  
The forgotten words  
Of generations.

The flame dances.  
It licked greedily at the hot wax  
And it grows shorter  
Shorter, until it  
Sputters  
Out.

- Anonymous







# WHEN NIGHTS WERE YOUNG

Oh, the good old days  
When nights were young  
And we whispered sweet nothings in each other's ears  
When we lay in the grass  
With our heads in the stars  
And watched the sparks fly  
When we ran hand-in-hand  
Across a moonlit field  
With the wind in our hair.

Oh, the good old days  
When we danced until dawn  
In black silk ties and white taffeta gowns  
Under the dim light of swaying lanterns  
When the music was sweet  
And the champagne flowed  
When the children laughed  
And the women sighed.  
And wept to see it all again.

Oh, the good old days  
When every morning was new  
(No matter how little we'd slept the night before)  
When sunlight sparkled through green leaves  
And every wrong turn was a new adventure  
When the roof leaked and the windows rattled  
And the sun shone every day  
When the mountains were green  
And the rivers were cold  
And every good wish followed you home.

- Anonymous







# WALLPAPERED IN WORDS

I put my writings on the wall  
One for all, tall tales  
Veils, failed sales  
Flailing like sails in the wind  
I'm scratching out the sentences, itch this  
Criss-crosswords adverbs slurred with deferred, tattered flattery  
Brains battered, smeared on these walls  
They're black wit my melting ink  
Cursive waves of spirals  
The poems  
Move like worms  
Squirm on the condition of unfamiliar terms  
And one by one  
Turn over in turn

One tiny stanza  
Crawls out and makes its way to my wall clock  
Climbs into my overhead light  
Burns, shrivels, dies  
And reforms into a transubstantiation of its former self  
Converted and tweaked  
To be recited in an unrelated topic.

A roped up opus, my power to describe  
Beauty, its rooted dutifully  
Tutti mi sono piaciuti  
Even the crude looting  
You can study it  
Come in, read my ceiling  
Be careful  
The walls have fears  
My floorboards  
Scattered failures, untailored  
But mostly, my instinctive being  
Seeing, fighting, or fleeing  
My rabid animal of exaggerated disproportional emotions  
The bear necessitator  
My walls  
My restrictions in diction  
Inflections, flicks, and friction from my inhibitions

But my meter is slowly chipping them away  
And when they are through, I  
Can reach the ceiling  
My aspirations  
Sometimes close, sometimes far  
Like the moon in summer  
Not much. And yourself?

Three words  
A summation of greater complexity than any other three I have known, and yet the definition of a  
term useless to billions.  
They come from a space in the paint that will have been yet to be overlooked  
By the time I overlook it  
They slide up to the overhead light

And explode  
Popping off countless tangential nonlinks  
Twisting, trying, typo-ing  
Trembling, and tearing

                    apart  
            right  
        here  
Without aim, and at last, it splits  
And leaves as quickly as it came.

- Nick Parker, III





# ROOFTOP *Euphoria*

To get there I climb out of the window. My legs flail for a minute looking for a foothold. I find one and slide my body out of the window. It's so small that I lose sight of my feet for a minute and have to climb by feel. My legs, then my hips, my shoulders, I duck my head, and all of a sudden, I'm outside. Lying on the roof, I feel invincible. Nothing can harm us, nothing can destroy this rooftop euphoria, the cold black slate beneath us a comforting chill against the warm night. Her cigarette smoke swirls around us, making our own personal clouds. They linger long enough to create a fog around us and disappear into the night. Shooting stars. What luck to be perfectly positioned by a stroke of chance to see them. We wish and refuse to tell. Seeing by the light of the moon, houses are barely visible in one direction, and the park and train tracks are illuminated by the moon in another. A train rumbles by, destroying the quiet calm of midnight in the city. We watch intently, like five-year-old boys content to stand for hours at train tracks watching each one, and then it noisily disappears from our view. The sound gets fainter until we hear the doors open at the station; the driver announces the finality of this train. I have watched the last train of the night hurtle past. From the roof, we hear brief phrases from the movie her sister and her friends are watching and their frequent peals of laughter. We see a woman in a sweatshirt and slippers walking her dog. Her head hangs; I imagine she eagerly awaits the comfort of the bed. The roof covers the back porch, it's relatively small, but I feel like it stretches for miles; either that or the world has shrunk. Shrunk to a microscopic haven, illuminated by the glory of midnight in the city. I can see everything.

- Anonymous

# Speak Now

OR

## *Forever Hold Your Peace*

Freedom of expression, cut off in a single school session.  
When will kids learn the lesson, of not listening to ignorant deception?

Adults dictate but don't practice what they preach,  
Leaving us to beseech a happiness pulled just out of reach,  
Which leaves a void where there once was creativity  
But is now filled with a substance that has nothing to do with festivity

Aspirations cut down to senseless drivel, not fit to define my identity.  
But rather, to mold me into an entity that's filled with uncertainty,  
Pushing to the brink of insanity  
So that I can no longer see what's in front of me.  
And all this happens under the gauze of unity

I am forced to renounce the right to be unique  
So that all I face is a future that's bleak,  
And lifeless. All in black and white.  
You need to start thinking about who is right,  
Or wrong.  
Who has the power to omit a song  
That speaks the truth, no matter how uncouth  
Or ruthless it may seem  
Because at our age we can't afford to live only in dreams

Responsibility may bring on depression and a sense of dejection  
But that is a reality  
Concerning a young adult's mentality

We should choose how to express  
The stress that flows through the mind  
Without having to worry about constrictions or binds  
Because no one should be able to confiscate MY ability to articulate

- Tatiana Mia Joyce, IV





# DESERT HANDS

My hand is a complex map  
Of deserted roads.  
The U-turns on my fingertips  
Would cause the greatest of accidents,  
If there were any cars.

These are the kind of roads  
That a lonely, rusting pick-up truck  
Might travel down.  
Desert roads, deserted.

A splinter in my thumb  
Is a prickly pear cactus  
Craving warm water  
To soak its skin.

I crave the water for another reason  
Altogether.  
It's not too comfortable  
To walk around with desert hands,  
Especially those with cacti in them.

I submerge my hands  
In a warm, soapy sea.  
All the roads are flooded  
And the prickly pear cactus  
Slides slowly out.

My desert hands  
Have become sunken islands  
Holding abandoned roads  
That only a lonely, rusting pick-up truck  
Might travel down.

- Maya Nojehowicz, IV







# O Que Is Gra?

Sunlight poured through white gossamer curtains, as the familiar smell of mothballs and wood greeted my nose. The grand piano to my left hummed remnants of the Victorian middle class ideal still alive in my grandparents' house, while the grandfather clock, taller and older than any person I knew, ticked loyally. The glass table (with a white doily on top) in the next room over had an empty bowl, no longer filled with the usual endless supply of jelly beans. But it wasn't so much the lack of jelly beans that made this visit so bizarre. It was the lack of two people to whom I owed my happiest, most care-free childhood memories...

## ***Serenidade. Serenity. Suaimhneas.***

The sky was a cloudless blue, as the blooming magnolia tree rustled in the wind. An older man sat reading a newspaper on the wicker porch furniture of brown house, while an impatient 6 year old resided next to him, continuously asking, "Can we walk to Charlie's house now, Grandpa?"

"Just a few more minutes," he answered good-naturedly.

Charlie's was a "penny-candy store" that hadn't sold candy for a penny since my mother was young. Still, it provided more than enough to satisfy the younger generation's sweet tooth. Regardless of his own personal wishes, my Grandpa was always ready to walk me there. The only hint of the throbbing pain in his legs was his slight reluctance to leave the newspaper at my beck and call. Of course, the meaning behind his delayed actions swept over my head like the fragrant wind on the cloudless blue day. But he was a subtle man, and his quiet, caring ways were what made him so unique; the perfect antithesis to the constant uproar that consumed my own house.

## ***Fidelidade. Faithfulness. Dilis.***

Grandpa always sat in his red, cushioned chair, faithfully reading the News. Regardless of what was occurring in the outside world, I could always count on this familiar scene whenever I walked through the double doors. And I was by no means alone in this. 78 Pomfret Street, with its sloping backyard, was the congregation point of the entire True family. It was there that I spent time with my baby cousin, Angelica, at her first and last Easter, and there that I got to know my cousin, Tina, before she passed away prematurely as well. There, I spent time with all my relatives at every holiday, playing basketball in the driveway, or whiffleball in the field. There, I was cheerful and lighthearted, without thinking anything of it.

Nana was often in the kitchen, where the indescribable good smells of traditional Irish-American cooking drifted about the air, merging with the constant background noise of trashy Soap Operas. My mother condemned them, but my grandmother could care less, It was all comedy to her- and anyways, this vivacious blonde (natural her whole life) was not one to be bossed around. "Cala a boca!" she'd reply laughingly, *Shut your mouth!*, using a Portuguese phrase she had probably heard her mother use. A plaque describing the origin of the name "True" hung on the wall as a souvenir of my Grandfather's English heritage. The vivacious *mulher Portuguesa* and the reserved Englishman's unifying point was the silver shamrock adorning the outside of the kitchen nook; both hailed from proud Irish backgrounds and their similar love for God and corned beef and cabbage confirmed it.

## ***Divertimento. Fun. Spraoi.***

Glossy pearls, glittering gold and sparkling jewels- my Nana's endless supply of jewelry, left over from years of various social events, made the scratch tickets available at Charlie's seem entirely foolish. Her jewelry collection was the only jackpot that ever interested me. She was always willing to climb the endless, oriental-rugged staircase with me so that I could pick out a new trinket. My young eye was not so discerning between heirlooms and costume jewelry, so finding out what I could have was a game in itself.

Though few could match my grandmother in the jewelry department, my Grandpa congratulated me with a necklace after my first flute recital. Never one to be ostentatious, Nana had to quietly whisper to me that *he* picked it out. Its swirls of red, green, and golden beads were my favorite part of performing on one-line flute solo, which my grandparents patiently sat through despite the sweltering heat of the music room.

## ***Diferencas. Differences. Difriochtai.***

About a year later, I received my First Communion on a warm, spring day in May. Despite my excitement over wearing a pretty dress and receiving a cross from my Nana, the gathering at Pomfret Street wasn't the same. My grandfather had died the previous January. The emptiness of his red hair made the sugary jelly beans on the coffee table not so appetizing.

I spent much of that summer with my grandmother, tearing through the Anne of Green Gables series while lying on the front porch wicker couch. Sometimes I walked to Charlie's, alone. There was no one to remind me to walk on the inside of the sidewalk, as far away from the street and danger as possible. Upon return, I'd always chat with my Nana, and, often, the various relatives and friends who had arrived during my absence. After the bustle left, however, I glimpsed the true feelings behind her vibrant wit. "Maria," she'd say, her bright blue eyes looking into mine, "I miss him." Two years later, she met him once again.

## ***Amor. Love. Gra.***

My grandparents gave me more than words can ever describe. Their warmth, their faithfulness, and their commitment remain the basis upon which every positive quality I have today was formed. No sugary jelly bean will ever taste as good, no red chair's occupant will be so sorely missed and no jewelry will bring back such fond memories as those found at the brown, Victorian building that was more than a house, or even a place of refuge. It was where hoards of relatives turned from acquaintances into friends, where I could always find a reason to smile, and where I eternally found love in its purest form; lighthearted, unwavering, perfeito *gra*.

- Maria Weissman, I











# THE REGISTER THE

“Has he ever had that effect on you?” she asked quietly as she wrapped her coat more tightly around her still thin frame, sitting cross-legged on the stone ledge in the park, occasionally teetering to the side but setting herself back into a middle-aged balance as best as she could before the cycle started up again.

She didn’t even realize that she’d parted her lips and spoken her thoughts until she felt soft gray eyes boring into the crown of her head. She lifted it slowly, meeting the bespectacled gray irises with emerald ones, now frozen from the weather. Folds of her reddish-blond hair fell back and settled themselves elsewhere on her head, hanging down almost lifelessly by her ears and yet framing her slightly pale face in a way that was not unattractive.

The man beside her temporarily stopped plucking at the strings of the guitar in his hands and positioned himself so that he, too, was sitting with slightly contorted legs. He was looking at her patiently, fingers rhythmically drumming against the guitar’s slender neck.

“Has who ever had what effect on me?” he asked, the tips of the fingers of his other hand now lightly tracing themselves across the guitar’s meticulously shaped body. He tilted his head a little to the side, politely begging her with his eyes to elaborate.

Upon finally discovering her self-betrayal by means of her voice box, her cheeks gained a color not unlike a fragrant, freshly-picked apple, gained a heat not unlike a naturally extinguished fire. She shook her head, tucking some obstinately rebellious reddish-blond hair behind her ear, and a shy, dismissive smile curved the corners of her lips upward. Further silent insistence ensued, and she shook her head again, brushing stray snowflakes from the body of the guitar—snowflakes that had not yet melted from a mere affliction of heat.

He shrugged lightly, returning his legs to their former dangling position, resting the broader end of the guitar on his thigh, playing a moderately-pitched chord—F major—and she leaned backward, supporting her upper body with her hands. She watched in admiration as he slowly got accustomed to playing a slow, almost seductive song that lured passersby to his conveniently open case. Needless to say, he attracted many a blushing girl, at most of whom he grinned and winked before pushing some dark brown hair out of his eyes and adjusting his glasses.

At this she rolled her eyes. It was true that most people would consider him to be handsome as the devil, but it was really up to him in terms of exploiting that universal view. She drummed her own fingertips on the cold stone, feeling the blood pulsing through and gently assaulting her palms, causing them to throb in the most subtle way. She was cold—not deathly so, but enough to cause her to shiver involuntarily.

# EQUALIZER





The sky seemed to cast a gray light over them both, the sun barely penetrating the thick winter clouds. The air influenced everyone with its temperature, harmlessly pummeling the city and its inhabitants with soft white flakes of snow. All was quiet save the almost metallic sound of plucked guitar strings in a harmonious manner.

Such harmony morphed into cacophony in mere seconds after she unconsciously let her eyes wander toward the intricate pattern his fingers were making. They both winced at the trio of sour notes before he looked up and once again caused green and gray to clash, like a thunderstorm about to upset a dense evergreen forest.

“What’s wrong?”

She raised her eyebrows in surprise for a moment before her blush deepened, and she drew her legs in toward her stomach, resting her chin atop her knees. “Nothing. It’s...” She let out a barely audible sigh. “It’s nothing. Go ahead and keep playing.”

“You might not want to sit like that, you know,” he pointed out softly, idly playing the D major scale, his middle finger traveling farther and farther down the neck of the guitar, closer and closer to the body of the instrument. “After all, someone is growing in there...” He tried to manage a somewhat weak smile.

Ever obedient when it came to advice, she adjusted herself on the ledge so that her legs were in front of her, her back to him not in an impolite way. She lightly gripped the edge of the stone so as not to fall off, resting her fingertips on her stomach.

She really didn’t like the fact that salt water didn’t freeze. She also didn’t like the fact that she couldn’t see her landing spot whenever she (deliberately *or* accidentally) fell backward. She did, however, like knowing that he was there for her to lean on.

“I’m nervous,” she stammered, gripping the ledge more tightly, her fingers traveling up to run several courses around the edge of one of the plastic buttons that adorned her coat, her other thumb rubbing against her wedding band.

He stopped playing completely, his palm surrounding the smooth back of the guitar’s neck. It wasn’t that her leaning on him impaired his arm—he could still play pretty well given the circumstance—but he couldn’t help but think about the things that had happened recently.

They’d gone to confide in their friends, friends who coincidentally lived in the same apartment. He’d gone to them first; then, of course, he’d run and hidden himself in their bedroom when he heard her knocking on the door and saying that she needed someone to talk to...someone that wasn’t him.



And then he'd heard her cry, he'd heard her tell them that she was scared, that regardless of how ready she felt to be a mother...she simply wasn't. She didn't know if she would know how to take care of the baby that was beginning to grow inside her. He'd felt like the worst man on Earth, and he'd wanted to resolve things—verily much so—but he couldn't figure out just how to go about doing that.

And he'd caused her to be the first one to crack. He'd caused a nervous, possibly hormone-induced woman to crack and shatter into a million pieces—just like his bubble, as she'd called it twelve years ago. The first time they'd fought. Not the last, he often forced himself to think.

He bent over, picking up the scattered nickels, dimes, and quarters—even the occasional slip of paper money—from the case and slipped them into his wallet, a fortune well-earned.

“Clara?”

She looked up and off toward the street in front of her, a street lined with bare trees and lumps of ice and snow of three colors.

“I’m scared, too.”

And she placed her head in her hands and cried.

- Sahar Hakim, II





# Babu

Blooming in the rhythms of this quiet night  
We humble our most extravagant dreams  
And feel the breeze  
Baby silence your inhibitions in the wake of this great hour

Tenderness succumbs to the relief  
We have so insolently gestured upon another  
When our outmost desires are lying in our palms  
And we forget that we had wanted them at all  
Only to breathe along the beating of our fearful hearts

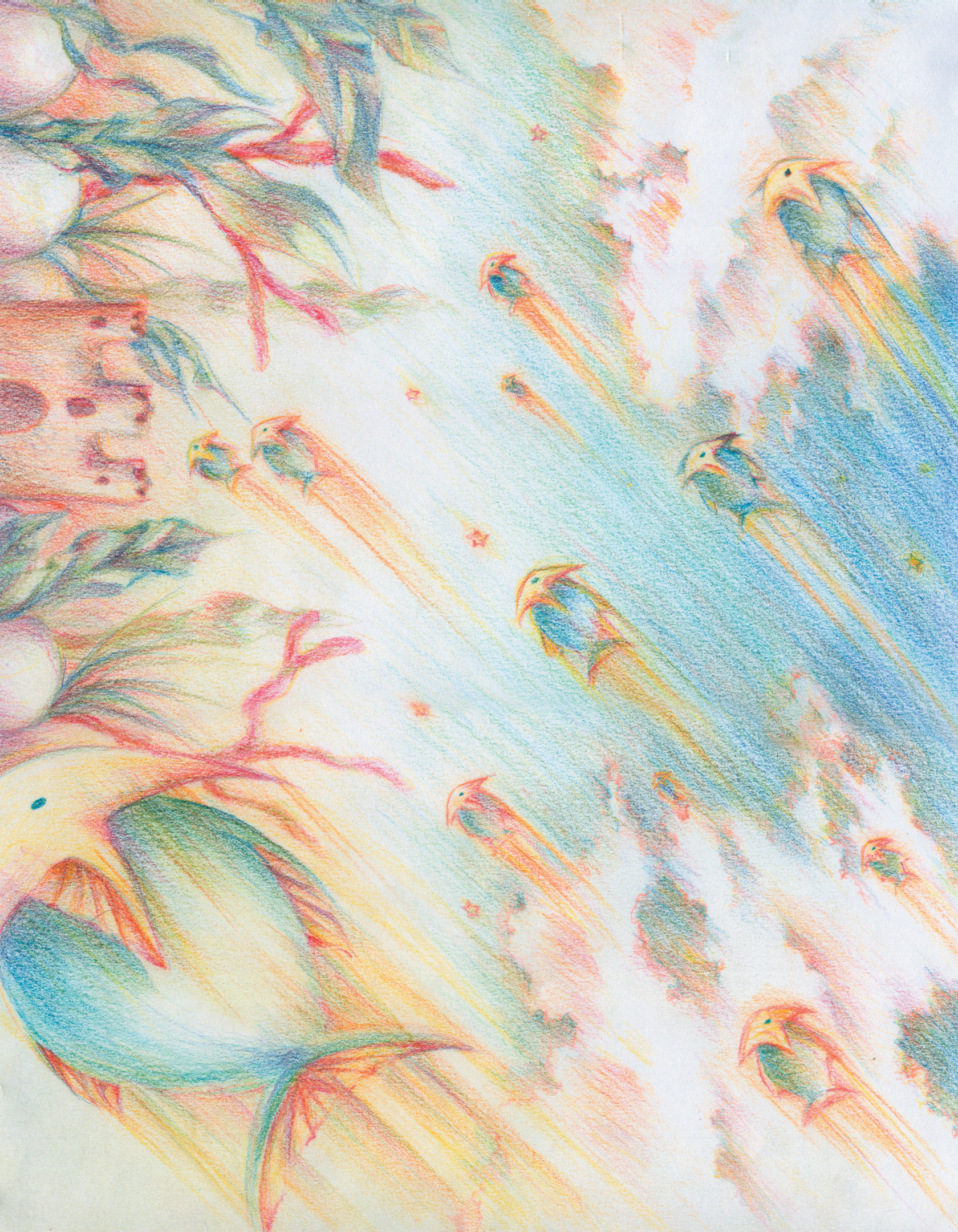
Only the trees will hold our secrets,  
Wisping through the sky their empty nests  
Along the salt lines of a wasted era  
Where, baby, you were the freedom people sang about.

I think I loved you once in a dream  
Sweet as cinnamon  
As you floated on the wind  
Carrying your fragrance along the tops of every tree

Like a melody your memory  
Plays musically  
Soft along the edges of the sea  
Wave to me baby  
As you swim along the shelled shores we've forged  
Wave to me.

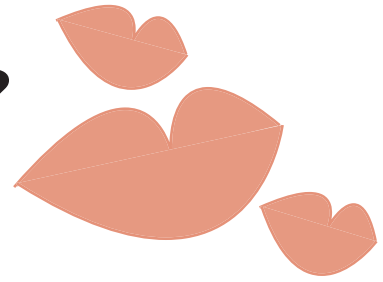
- Aoife O' Flaherty, II







# To *Kiss* or Not to *Kiss*?



First impressions last a lifetime- or so they say. If you believe in this theory, then heed my advice young rookies. First dates can be nerve-racking, I know, and if you don't know what you're doing you may end up panicking. Many questions might run through your mind: Where do we go? What do I wear? Do I meet him somewhere? Or should I demand he pick me up? How do I act? Oh My God! See? I told you it's nerve-racking, but luckily for you, you have me...I will solve all your problems and answer any questions you might have. If you simply heed my advice, everything *should* go smoothly. Just trust me. I am your friend. I would never steer you wrong.

Ok, your crush has finally noticed you and asked you out on a date. So the first thing you must think about is where you two lovebirds will be going. *You* must make this decision. *You* decide what you will do, and also what time. You should probably go for the classic "dinner and a movie" first date, and make sure you get home at a reasonable time. If you want the relationship to go anywhere, you need to make sure your parents approve, and they won't like a young man who keeps you out until two in the morning. You might also like to switch it up a little bit and go with something a little different, such as playing paintball. If you go with the latter, you will have no problem coming up with an outfit. After all, it won't really matter.

The outfit! This is an important part of your first date. He did notice you in the first place so you much be doing *something* right, but don't let that get to your head. We need to remain focused here. You can't look too trashy, but you do want to catch his attention, so dressing like a granny is not an option. And you must be sure to be in style; wearing that poncho which was *so* last year is a definite no-no. Are you listening? NO PONCHOS!

Ok, you might be wondering what you do wear if ponchos are out, granny outfit is out, and the trashy look is definitely out. Wear something casual you might wear if you were going to the movies with your friends but still wanted to impress people (mainly any dudes you might see while you were out and about). You do want to impress him and make him want to see you again after all. The time of the year of the date also plays a role in what you wear. In the summer, a cute flirty skirt would work, but you definitely can't wear that in the winter. A cute sweater with boots would probably be more appropriate. You get the idea.

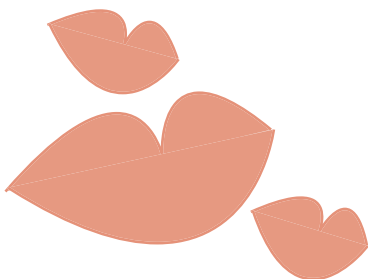
Now one thing you must decide is whether you'll meet at the place where you date is taking place, or whether he will pick you up at your house and you two will proceed from there. Push for the second of the two options, because meeting up on the first date can always end in disaster. One of you might be late, and the other person is stuck waiting and looking stupid. At least if he's late in picking you up from your house, you'll have something to do while you wait, instead of standing outside of a restaurant or movie theater by yourself.

Ok, so you have your outfit, and you've decided where you guys are going, and he's agreed to come pick you up. Now, how do you act, because this will ultimately determine if there will be a Date Number Two? Well for one be charming. Laugh at his jokes, and listen to him when he's telling you that really long and uninteresting story about his favorite athlete. You might want to store a few facts in your head for a later time though, because they could come in handy. Smile and be witty too. But most important: do not let the conversation die. Whatever you do, avoid those awkward silences where neither of you had anything to say and you kind of wind up glancing around at anything *but* each other... There can be silences, of course, but they must be at the right time! Maybe near the end of your date if you find yourself staring into his eyes, and he's staring back, and you both fall silent... that would be okay, even a little romantic! So if you sense that the conversation is going nowhere at a bad time, try and think of something to bring it back to life.

The date is over (you've survived!) and he's dropping you off. You might think you're home free BUT (and this is a big but) the end of the date can be as nerve-racking as the beginning because with the end of the date comes the final question: to kiss or not to kiss? The answer to the question is simple. If you didn't feel you two really clicked, a hug and a simple "Thank you. I had a nice time" will suffice. If, on the other hand, you had a nice time and generally like the guy, I would say go for it. Or rather, let him go for it. If he seems to be going in for the kill, and you like him, why wouldn't you kiss him? But hey, it's your date and your choice.

If you follow my simple advice, nothing should go wrong. Life never goes according to plan so something is bound to pop up, but being the smart and quick-thinking young woman you are, I'm sure you can handle it.

- Christelle Saintis, I









# UNTITLED

A Response to Edward Hopper's Painting, *"Room in New York"*

She's sitting there, just on the stool, wondering how this man that she's loved for years that she once loved with a passionate hunger can be sitting three feet from her just a yard away but he seems like he can't like he doesn't want to notice.

Or maybe he doesn't want her he doesn't want her anymore and here she is a piece of crumpled-up thrown-away garbage and she can't remember when it happened it wasn't quick enough but one day she woke up and realized that though they were both there the bed was empty.

And so was she and so was he so they are just empty empty like his face like her heart like the plunk of the piano key. When did it happen like the hand of a clock just ticking slowly away and by the way why did *his* hand feel so cold when she touched it? When did it last touch her it used to make her melt that hand of his even with the slightest brush on her right shoulder. That same shoulder is almost bare because she's wearing that dress he used to love he that said he loved so why doesn't he notice why doesn't he care? She knows that she's wearing this siren-red number to bait him. She knew it wouldn't work she knew it so why does it hurt so bad?

And what's wrong with them? She can't say she can't pinpoint it out point her finger at something and say that's why. It's no use to try and talk to him he'd brush it off he wouldn't listen he'd ask why she's upset and it'd seem like he cares but what would she say and as soon as she'd start to explain he'd tell her its okay and go back to his paper so that she'd know he didn't really hear her. He'd hear her words but wouldn't give them the time of day because he'd probably think he knows what she's thinking or who knows what she's thinking (does she know what she's thinking?), but it doesn't matter anyway.

So even though he probably can't tell it's obvious to her that they're opposites now they were once the same but not anymore. Or maybe they were once different and that was what made it exciting, but now they're too alike so that it's all just boring boring as hell and who was he to sit there and ignore it? Didn't he realize how alone they both were how alone they made each other didn't he feel the sting of loneliness in the dark at night in a silent room? Didn't he know that she was only at the piano because she couldn't bear looking at his indifferent face for one more second?

And it wasn't that he didn't care. Not really. That was the thing that he cared but maybe not too much anymore to actually show it like he used to grin at her and call her his baby but not anymore. She wasn't his baby she didn't belong to him or with him she just belonged to herself and that's all she had at the end of the day was herself 'cause that's all she came into the world with, and that's all she was going out with. Only herself but wasn't there something more shouldn't a part of her belong with someone else?

He looks up from his paper. "Something wrong?"

She pauses to look into his tired eyes. "No."

"It's nothing"

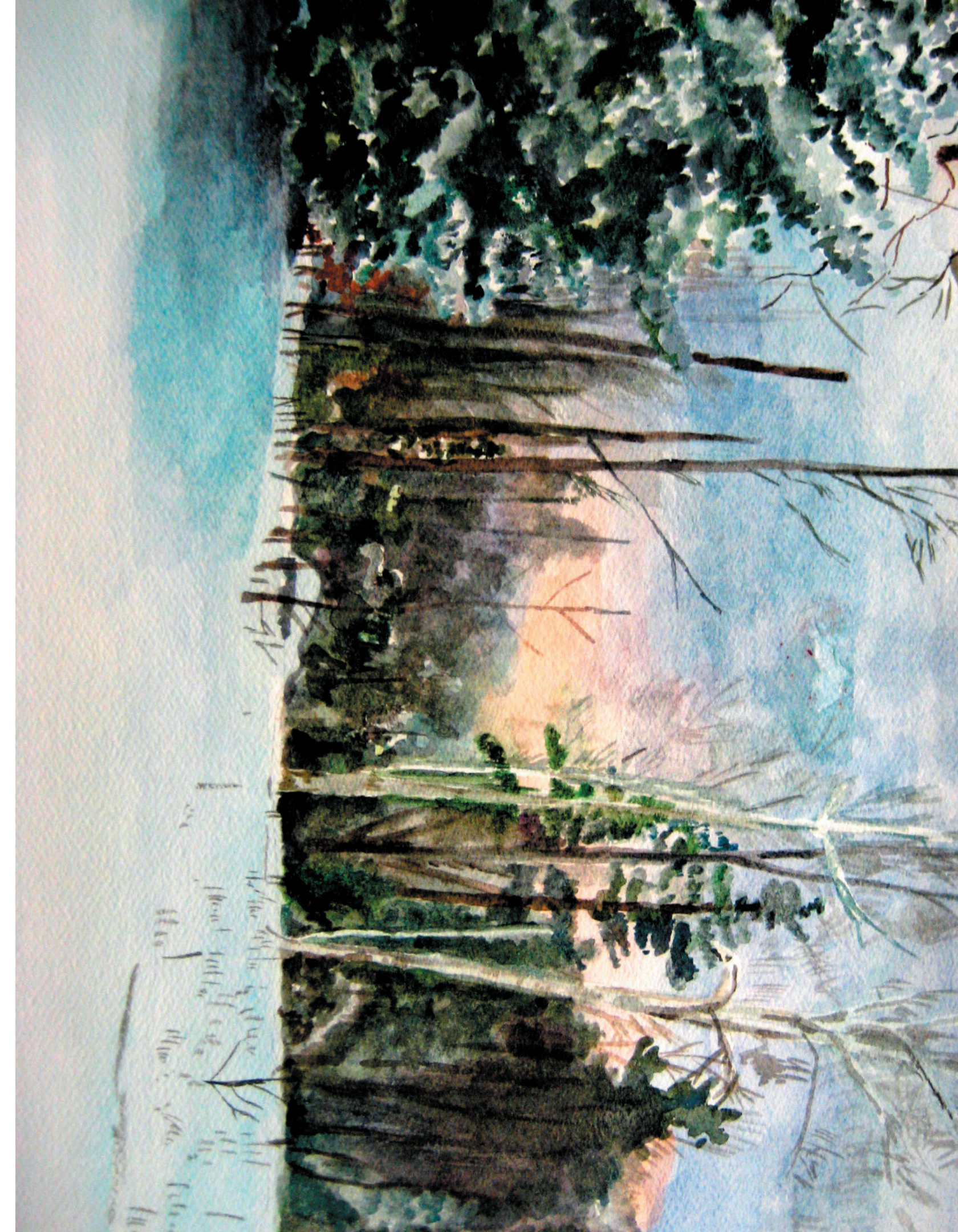
- Caitlin Healey, II



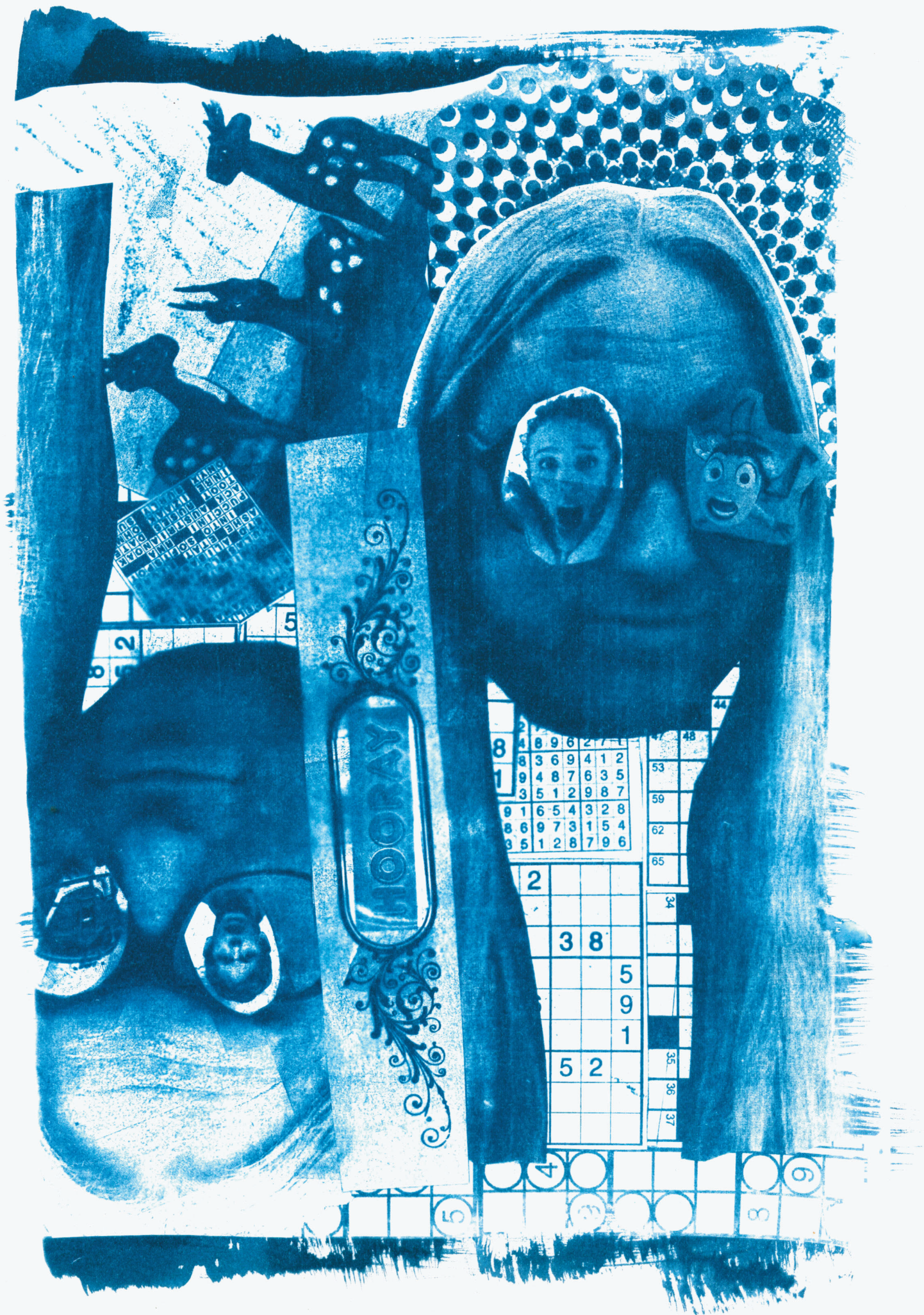




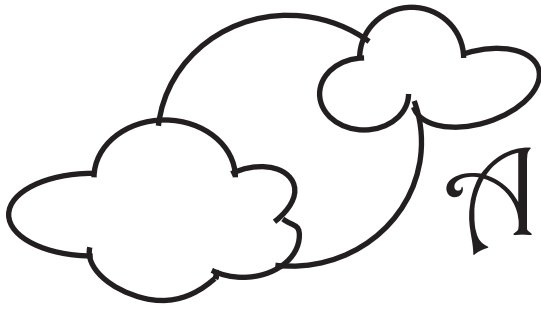












## A Bodily Trade



My ears have traded places with my eyes.  
 I see music and wind and words  
 When they leave someone's lips.  
 I hear colors and light and the clouds  
 When I glance up and a bird flies past the sun.

The voices I see clash wildly and fight each other for space  
 While music continuously flutters about, dodging the voices  
 And weaving in between them.  
 The wind I see rushes quickly through the air  
 Gathering things up with its long, winding arms  
 And going right through the music and words,  
 Picking a bit of them up along the way  
 And carrying them off to God knows where.

My vision has become an orchestra  
 Playing a never-ending symphony  
 The moonlight on a pond is the bassoon playing soft and  
 sturdy  
 In the background.  
 A chase through a house by a small girl and her kitten  
 Is the high-pitched violin played furiously fast  
 And a cymbal clashes every time the little girl knocks down a  
 lamp.

The red, pink, orange rays of a sunset  
 Are the cellos somewhere to my right.  
 With every sweeping stroke of their bows  
 A smudge of red weeps down from the sun,  
 As it cries softly goodnight to the world.

A peaceful piano solo  
 Is the last thing I hear  
 Before the sun dips slowly out of the sky.

- Maya Nojehowicz, IV





# M2 Baby ●

She leaned against the cold brick wall, sighing. The schedule had listed 5:15 as the departure time, but the bus was almost a full hour late now. She held the half shredded schedule in her hand, a post-it note slapped diagonally across the front. 66 Fairmont Street Cambridge MA. Not expecting the freezing cold of the new city, she had packed only a thin jacket and as a result, her teeth were chattering uncontrollably. Looking up, the woman saw that the sky was beginning to turn a dull gray color. She wondered how her mother could live in such a city – a city with a sky that lost color only a few hours into the afternoon, where street musicians crawled into the subways at the first sign of rain. She brightened when she thought of her mother and smiled, knowing that the older woman would be shocked out of her mind when she discovered her daughter on her doorstep. Sitting down on her half-frozen suitcase, she looked around the corner again for the bus, waiting.

\*\*\*

A smoke alarm went off in the house on 66 Fairmont Street Cambridge MA. Smells of dinner floated out the door, and a cold gust of wind moved in as the old lady opened it and waved a plastic mat below the alarm. She returned to her cooking, efficiently crisscrossing the kitchen; boiling, chopping, and baking while talking long-distance to a friend halfway across the world. The call ended and she went to turn off the stove and shut the door. She sat down on the hard, polished wood of the kitchen stool, her dinner forgotten for the moment. The woman could smell the cold air floating through the house, the empty house that seemed to get bigger every year. It had gotten more and more quiet every year as both her daughters left to live their own lives and became unbearably silent when her husband had passed. It reminded her of her first apartment in America, a dark place with cracked linoleum floors and a sputtering radiator that didn't have enough life in it to give off any heat. Steam rose from the pot as she sat in the expanding room and remembered the choice had made that year.

\*\*\*

*The young woman sighs, her breath making whorls in the cold December air. She shifts a warm, pink bundle to her other hip and wraps her fleece tighter around her body. Her baby is fast asleep, lashes curling against the curves of her cheeks. She looks around the corner and spots the M2 shuttle bus, which has, for once, come exactly on time.*

*Heat surrounds her as she steps on the crowded bus. "Here you go, ma'am" A gray haired man in a thick blue jacket rises and offers her his seat. The woman smiles, and says "Thank You", wedging herself between an old man sleeping with his mouth gaping open, and a graduate student, frantically highlighting some passage in a thick book. She looks down at the bundle. Her baby is awake and stares back at her, proceeding to engage herself by pulling on the old man's hood.*

*The woman looks out the window, slipping into daydreams. This strange city is so cold, so different from the one she has left. She had worked hard to come here, studying through the night for the exam that was her only gateway into this new country. She had made it. But loneliness had crept up on her unbidden, and the suffocating cold had surrounded her, refusing to let go.*



*She remembers her parents, who stood together with proud smiles on their faces, pressing a hundred American dollars into her hand before she boarded. She remembers her eldest daughter, then only five years old, who zoomed around the airport, unaware that her mother would soon be leaving her. She remembers her husband, who had held her close until the last minute had seeped away, promising to join her as soon as he could. And she remembers the rainy night when she sat down in the lobby of Brigham and Women's Hospital and cried and cried, having just found out that she was carrying a child – a child she believed she could offer no wealth to. How could she provide happiness for someone else when she didn't have nearly enough for herself? If she returned to her home country, she would not be able to have this baby. But by staying, she would be choosing to raise a child alone with little money. The weeks after had been filled with a weariness and pain only a mother could feel. She was wheeling around in a dense, foggy, unknown city, circling around a decision that she did not want to make. But she soon realized that there had only ever been one option.*

*As the M2 rolls to a stop and the old man rises to leave, she feels a tug on her hair. Looking down, the woman remembers her choice and smiles at the daughter she chose to keep.*

\*\*\*

The woman wandered down a small, crooked street lined on both sides with trees that dripped snow. The bus had dropped her off on the main street, leaving her plenty of opportunities to get lost. She sloshed past a brightly lighted Russian bakery with her luggage, resisting the urge to go in and order something scalding to burn away the icy cold. She was almost there. Stopping in front of a dark green Victorian house with a single light on, the woman gripped the handle of her suitcase. Shaking, less from the cold than from a sense of overwhelming anticipation, she rang the doorbell and waited. With a creak, an old lady opened the door and the two women stood for but a moment, regarding each other. The mother wobbled down the snowy steps and wrapped her arms around her daughter. She was home.

- Ada Lin, III







# For Rent

The truck is here and the boxes sealed and soon I'll close this door for the last time. I hate moving. Because you always leave behind the things that mean the most to you. The tire swing that's too low. The broken wind chimes I made in 2<sup>nd</sup> grade. The pouch of assorted beads made from all the necklaces that I've broken through the years.

*So many memories left behind.*

No one will ever understand how much these memories mean to us. I hate going into my new house. An empty house; stripped of all foundation but full of someone else's memories. A house doesn't cease to be someone's home even after they're long gone. We have all left our marks on the places we call home. And in turn, we have all left our mark on each other. I stack the last few boxes and I wish something could delay the final goodbye. But it's all I have left. I don't look back. Because I never look back. The years I spent, the memories I made, have been sealed and forgotten like so many boxes.

Someday I'll look back. I'll look back  
and start to find the things I left behind.

- Lisa Wang, III











# A Scorching *Seaside* Experience

The sun was hot overhead. It was impossible for me to imagine how scorching hot it must be on the sun, but it was still tolerable down here on the beach. I could almost see rays of heat rising from the golden-yellow sand I felt like at any moment I would look down and see my skin melting and oozing off my bones into a puddle at my feet. Either that or it would be as red as the skimpy bikini that I had on, barely covering what needed to be covered. My mother had raised her eyebrows that morning when I had gotten in the car, but had decided not to say anything about it... at least not yet. Sweat dripped down my forehead and I wiped it away with the back of my hand. I looked at the dampness there and frowned, disgusted with what the heat was doing to me. How was it possible to look cute when sweat seemed to reappear as quickly as I wiped it away?

I shaded my eyes with my right hand and gazed down the beach. It was crowded with all sorts of people – women spread out on their towels letting the sun kiss their skin and give them that perfect golden color so sough after; couples back and forth while their girlfriends watched, giggling and smiling; children laughing, playing in the sand and building sand castles while parents looked on not far away. I noticed one young girl who was scooping up sand and putting into a little pink bucket that sat next to her. She suddenly got either hungry or curious as to what the sand actually tasted like, and began to eat it. I chuckled as her mother, horrified, snatched the sand from her and carried her to the water in an attempt to clean her. Exhausted, I closed my eyes and lay back on my Pocahontas beach towel. Where was a cool breeze when you needed one? Finally I decided that laying in the sun and thinking about how incredibly unbearable the heat was, wasn't going to cool me off.

Smells of fried dough, hot dogs, and French fries drifted down the beach to where I lay. I suddenly realized how hungry I was and decided to get something to help me cool down. The line at the Snack Shack was long but I was willing to do anything to beat the heat, so I waited with the throngs of hungry people. The cement was burning, and I had to jump from foot to foot in an effort to not burn the bottoms of my feet to a blackened mess. After what seemed like years I reached the counter and placed my order: a small, mint chocolate chip ice cream in a cone with chocolate jimmies. The usual.

After I had received my ice cream, I started to make my way to my towel. I had only gone two steps when I felt that all too familiar sensation of dripping ice cream. Mint green rivers were running down my ice cream cone and onto my hands. It was melting about as fast as I could like it off and I decided I was fighting a losing battle. It was when I glanced up from licking my fingers that I saw him.



He was walking down by the water and the sun shone on his perfect chocolate colored skin. His muscles rippled as he stretched his body toward the sky and yawned. All I could think was *Oh. My. God.* He was maybe *the* most perfect specimen of man on the face of the earth. As he stretched, he glanced up in my direction and I became aware of the green ice cream running down my hands. It was just my luck to have the most beautiful boy on the beach look at me while the sun was melting my ice cream into a disgusting mess. How could I clean myself up before approaching this “beach god”?

The answer lay stretched out in front of me. Glittering, navy blue waves crashed onto the shore. The white caps of foam receded and advanced with the ebb and flow of the tide. There was where I could clean myself while looking cute at the same time. I dropped my ice cream leaving it for some lucky dog to find, and ran toward the ocean as fast as was possible while stumbling and weaving in and out of the crowd. I tripped over several blankets, knocked over at least one beach umbrella, and might have kicked sand into the food of several people, but it was impossible to stand on the scorching sand for more than two seconds without burning the underside of your feet. It was also impossible to run sexily, but I tried to flip my hair over my shoulder in an alluring way. I glanced behind me and I saw the “beach god” looking at me curiously. *Now for the finale*, I thought. *Don't mess this up girl!*

At last I reached the ocean and dived in, head first. The cool water closed over my head and I could feel the breath knocked out of my body at the sudden change from blazing hot to freezing cold. I stood up in the water shivering and glanced around for the “beach god” before scurrying back to my towel. He was busy talking to one of the new lifeguards- the one with dimples and blond hair. Apparently my entrance into the water hadn't been “sexy” enough. I threw myself onto the warmth of my towel and sighed. As I lay there, I could feel water dripping from my hair onto my shoulder and then onto my towel, creating a dark spot that continued to increase. The sun slowly dried my eyes. The smell of sunscreen and salty skin wafted up to me and I licked my lips- yup, they were salty. I smiled and rolled onto my back. I didn't have to rush to talk to the “beach god”. I had all day.

- Christelle Saintis, I



# The Things *You* Can't *forget*

It takes very little to make her happy.

Ants marching in a straight line on a sidewalk, a sunny day that's not too sunny, 'you've got mail' popping up on her screen, a bumblebee's erratic flight... Things that most people wouldn't particularly be excited about. But she's a happy person by nature.

If he'd met her a little later after school, in college maybe, things would have been different. You can tell by the way they carefully avoid eye contact and their polite smiles in the hallways- that they would have been great together. It's only awkward, because it could have happened- it *should* have happened. And because of various reasons; it hasn't.

They say that they're just too different.  
And maybe they are.

But they'll never know until they have the conversation that they've been carefully avoiding for months. This is the conversation where they get to know each other. Where they talk about something other than the weather or the movies or some other trivial things of no real meaning.

They say that where the feet point, the heart will follow. She's never actually looked to the direction of where his feet went- but she knows that he smiles at her before he talks. She's not quite sure if that means anything; but she's pretty sure.

The thought of him makes her smile.  
The thought of her makes him wonder.

She's not worried about what's going to happen to them. She's going to focus on her dreams and then maybe sometime after school, in college maybe, see him again and make it as hard for him to leave her as it is to watch him slip away. So she'll wave to him at graduation and he'll smile at her and she'll smile to herself. She knows that she may never see him again, but at that point- it won't matter anymore. He knows that things might never work out, but when it comes to that point- what can go wrong?

She's not someone you'll ever meet again.  
And he knows he'll never forget her.

And even if things go wrong someday, she's a happy person by nature and she won't let anything or anyone, even him, dampen her mood on a sunny day that's not too sunny, with flying bumblebees and marching ants and getting new mail.

He's not the kind of person you give up easily.  
And she knows that he'll always be on her mind.

But they say that where the feet go, the heart will follow. And however clumsy their steps may be, they'll find their way to each other some time after school, maybe in college.

- Anonymous







# I am from

I am from the many books I have read

From the leather couch where much time was spent

I am from quietly resting in the subtle shade where my favorite books bade

I am from the echoes of my childhood amidst the quiet sidewalks

I am from the rustling of dry leaves while the trees sway in the gentle breeze

I am from the bustling city, from MBTA to train but always free

I am from cars rolling by to staring wistfully into the sky as the clouds roll by  
and constantly questioning reality with the word “why?”

I am from the branches of the family tree, my parents the strong root

And my young sisters the seed, and I the one left in between

I am the constant “Honesty is the best policy” and at all times trying to succeed

I am from the swerves of the roller coaster; riding these drops and curves with ease

I am from the oceans salty breeze, to the shimmering sapphire seas

From the face of Big Ben to reflections upon how life is spent

I am from the pain of loneliness and the quiet prayer for a brighter day,

trying to let fear and anger float away trying not to fall astray

I am from the young gospel choir to sisters who are haywire from deciding whether I should be

Independent and follow my desire or take the role of the higher

- Justin Singletary, V

# Fall

## from Grace

Cities burn down  
Rocks crumble  
and we cling to existence  
Against all odds

Seas are drained  
Mountains are parted  
The very earth beneath us-  
Rips open  
We cling to existence  
Like the sole light  
In a universe of darkness...  
A flickering candle  
In the night

Someone once said  
That the world hasn't changed  
It just got smaller  
And the wonder is lost

The world hasn't changed  
We haven't changed  
We are still the same angry,  
Ignorant, judgmental people  
That we've always been  
We've lived like this  
For so long  
We don't know any other way

The Age of Man brought about  
The Age of Reason  
And now it brings an age of destruction

When will it be enough?  
When will enough of us have died  
To prove some point-  
Long ago forgotten?  
When will we have shed enough  
Tears, blood, sweat  
When will we have wasted enough  
Of our live fighting each other?

As long as there is hate,  
There will be war  
And there will always be hate,  
So there will always be war-  
But it doesn't have to end this way.

The world hasn't changed.  
And it doesn't need to.  
It doesn't have to change-  
But it can be different

*It doesn't have to end this way.*

- Lisa Wang, III





# Autumn Falls

Crumpled, Brown  
Brittle and Broken  
The dead lay silently  
And the silent sit, dead  
on the backyard battlefields  
remnants of wars between  
watery hot skies and the  
icy North winds. Faint  
fingers that once absorbed life  
into the luscious green foliage  
now lies limp, lying with crumbling  
walls, dried riverbeds of life lost  
in the cold, dry dirt. It's  
deadly beauty  
discreet,  
serene,  
forgotten.

- Caytie Campbell-Orrock, IV







# art credits

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Table of Contents	Tony Huang, I
7	Lina Kong, I
9	Stacey Leonard, I
11	Connie Choi, I
13	Tony Huang, I
15	Tony Huang, I
19	Amy Sun, I
22	Ari Klickstein, I
25	Ari Klickstein, I
27	Hitomi Abiko, I
30	Olivia Schwob, III
32	Yunwei Sun, III
33	Amy Sun, I
34	Cynthia Poon, II
38	Cynthia Poon, II
39	Tony Huang, I
43	Ashley Hernandez, V
47	Stacey Leonard, I
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